

INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY IN CHANGING GLOBAL MILIEU

SURESH DHANDA

Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, S. A. Jain (PG) College, Ambala City, Haryana, India

ABSTRACT

The end of the cold war compelled India to re-evaluate and realign its foreign policy according to new changed global milieu. Now it is seriously searching for a greater role in world affairs. Contouring the foreign policy to secure widespread international support and efforts to obtain a permanent seat in Security Council are commensurate with its ambition to be a great power. It is striving to develop its economy to enhance trade and foreign investment, foster international political stability and uplift its international profile. It is also engaged seriously in enhancing its nuclear and missile capabilities to cover the Central Asia, Middle East, East Asia and Australasia. But it will not be a smooth sailing for India. It has to face formidable challenges, while vying for a major power status, at all the levels i.e. global, regional, bilateral and domestic. The present paper discovers the present world order system and tries to know where India stands in it. It further investigates the efforts taken by India to acquire a greater role in world affairs. Finally, it highlights the major challenges India is going to face while jostling for a major power status.

KEYWORDS: World Order, Post-Cold War Era, Global Challenges, Nuclear Weapons, Economic Ties, NSSP, Look East Policy

INTRODUCTION

The international system is still in a flux even after the two decades are over. Scholars of international relations are not unanimous about the nature of world order in post cold war era. Accordingly, they have defined this changed global order in different ways creating a surrealistic picture. The present world seems neither completely unipolar nor multipolar. Rather, growing political and economic interdependence is witnessing a non polar world which is more akin to the prevailing realities.¹ On the basis of current distribution of power, world order can be termed as one based on “multi-level interdependence” which resembles, as Joseph S Nye Jr describes, to a “complex three-dimensional chess game” in which one can win only by playing vertically as well as horizontally.² In this complex system, on the top level of military issues, the world is still a unipolar system with the United States as the sole super power impregnable. But at the second level, in terms of economic issues, the world is multipolar. In this case US is not a hegemonic power or an empire, rather it has to bargain to achieve outcomes with other players like China, Japan and EU.³ The bottom level encompasses the broad range of transnational issues from terrorism to climate change and human rights. Here power is distributed in an unequal manner among states and non-state actors. Hence, world cannot be comprehended strictly with the terminologies like unipolarity, hegemony or multipolarity. In military and economic spheres, the present day international system is dominated by US, Russia, UK, France, China (in military and economic terms), Germany and Japan (in economic terms). But there are differences in power position of US v/s all others; Russia v/s UK, EU, France and China; and China v/s the rest.⁴ Among them US is the only superpower commanding a strong capability in all the areas of power and can, therefore, be referred to as a “complete power.” In this respect remaining are second-tier major powers consisting of majority of

crucial power resources. Other category is of middle powers or regional powers including India, Egypt, South Korea, South Africa, Australia, Brazil, Indonesia, Iran, Pakistan and Nigeria. Rests of the countries are developing nations which are neither secure nor autonomous in their working in international relations.

SITUATING INDIA IN WORLD ORDER

India with its sub-continental size, large population, economic and military strength, leadership role among the developing countries, and diplomatic activism at the UN and other international forums, is the strongest contender for major power status among all other potential candidates from the developing world. Compared to the present day major powers, India's capabilities in economic arena present a mixed picture. India's economy is the world's fourth largest in Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) terms in 2010.⁵ Its GDP of \$ 4060392 million in PPP terms is larger than that of Russia, UK, France and Germany. It will soon overtake Japan for third place if current trends continue. Its GDP is approximately 27 percent that of the U.S, and 40 percent that of China. In the long run, India may even excel all major powers except US and China. In PPP terms, India's economy is approximately twice that of Russia, a powerful indicator of the extent of Russia's economic decline (See Table 1).

Table 1: Top 10 Countries by GDP Based on PPP for 2010

Rank	Country	GDP(PPP) \$ Million
1.	USA	14657800
2.	China	10085708
3.	Japan	4309432
4.	India	4060392
5.	Germany	2940434
6.	Russia	2222957
7.	U.K	2172768
8.	Brazil	2172058
9.	France	2145487
10.	Italy	1773547

Source: World Economic Outlook Database, April 2011, International Monetary Fund

In PPP terms, at \$ 3339 India's per capita income is the lowest in the reference group of major powers (See Table 2).

Table 2: Per Capita GDP (PPP) \$ (2010)

Rank	Country	Per Capita GDP (PPP) \$
1.	United States	47283.63
2.	Germany	36033.28
3.	United Kingdom	34919.51
4.	France	34077.04
5.	Russia	15836.75
6.	China	7518.716
7.	India	3339.306

Source: World Economic Outlook Database, April 2011, International Monetary Fund

Nearly 30 percent of Indians (more than 300 million) live below the poverty line. The Indian middle class of some 300 million by itself has a much higher per capita income, but that does not modify the aggregate capability of the nation. India's economic position is relatively weak, and it is the Achilles heel of India in achieving major-power status. India has slipped by two places to 51st in the World Economic Forum's global competitiveness rankings 2010-11. While standards of living are rising, yet India it remains a poor country at the aggregate level. The quality of life indicators are all moving

upward, but very slowly. Even after that, India, among all the regional powers, holds the highest promise and potential in acquiring and exerting power in medium and long terms. In military terms, India possesses the capacity of a regional military power. Its capabilities are not equal to those of the major powers i.e. permanent members of Security Council (P-5). It falls on the ninth position of world ranking on military spending (See Table 3).

Table 3: Military Spending of Top Ten Countries (2010)

Rank	Country	Spending in Billion US \$	World Share in Percentage
1	USA	698	43
2	China	119	7.3
3	UK	59.6	3.7
4	France	59.3	3.6
5	Russia	58.7	3.6
6	Japan	54.5	3.3
7	Saudi Arabia	45.2	2.8
8	Germany	45.2	2.8
9	India	41.3	2.5
10	Italy	37.8	2.3
11	World Total	1630	

Source: SIPRI Year Book 2011, Oxford University Press

In 2010, it was an estimated \$41.3 billion, 2.8 per cent lower in real terms than in 2009 but 54 per cent higher than in 2001.⁶ The decline in 2010, the first fall in Indian military spending since 2002, appears to reflect a rebalancing in relation to economic growth rates. But it can boast of the third largest armed forces after China and USA.⁷ The size and potential of its professional Army with conventional weapons provide effective instrumentalities to deal with any eventuality, where and whenever required. Indian Air Force is also said to be the fourth largest in the world. But Chinese Air Force has always been more than six times the size of Indian Air Force. Indian Air Force is equipped with short range combat aircrafts. Power projection overseas has always been an essential component of great power status. In this arena, Indian Navy is projecting itself as a stabilizing force in the Indian Ocean region through increased maritime diplomacy and joint maneuvers with foreign navies. Indian navy has witnessed a phenomenal growth, especially in the areas of aviations, submarines, surface forces and land based establishments to acquire sea control capability. But India's submarine fleet is very small as compared to the Chinese fleet which includes more than hundred conventional and a couple of nuclear power submarines. In nuclear weapons field, India elevated its position by joining the ranks of nuclear powers in 1998, although its arsenal is estimated to be much smaller than the top five, namely USA, Russia, China, UK and France.⁸ It is roughly equal to Pakistan's. India is estimated to have 80-100 nuclear weapons as compared to Pakistan's 90-110 (See Table 4).

Table 4: World Nuclear Forces 2010 (Approximate)

Country	Deployed Warheads	Other Warheads	Total Inventory
USA	2150	6350	8500
Russia	2427	8570	11000
UK	160	65	225
France	290	10	300
China	.....	200	240
India	.....	80-100	80-100
Pakistan	.....	90-110	90-110
Israel	.....	80	80
Total	5027	15500	20530

Source: SIPRI Year Book 2011, Oxford University Press

Note: Other warheads mean the warheads in reserve awaiting dismantlement or require some preparation like assembly or loading before they become fully operational.

India has configured its nuclear devices as aerial bombs and missile warheads. While India reportedly has a number of different types of aircrafts but it apparently chose Soviet built Mig-27 M Flogger aircraft with a range of 800 km and the Anglo-French Jaguar aircraft with a 1600 km range to deliver nuclear aerial bombs.⁹ The Sukhoi 30 MKI aircraft with a capacity to carry an 800 kg payload and with a normal range of 3200 km and air-to-air refueling range of about 7000 km, gives India a nuclear deep strike capability and some experts believe that India acquired the Sukhoi to counter China's deep strike capability.¹⁰ Mirage-2000 H can also be equipped with nuclear bombs but is more likely to be used for air defence missions.¹¹ Besides aircrafts, India has also developed nuclear capable ballistic missiles as delivery systems.¹² India has an extensive, largely indigenous ballistic missile programme, including infrastructure for both solid and liquid fuelled missiles. India's existing missiles are of *Prithvi* and *Agni* series. It has *Prithvi*-I with a range of 150 km capable of having payload of 1000kg, *Prithvi*-II with a range of 250 km capable of having a payload of 500 kg and *Prithvi*-III with a range of 350 km.¹³ India's second family of ballistic missiles is the *Agni*-I, II and III. The *Agni* missiles are designed to extend the reach of Indian nuclear capabilities, particularly to China.¹⁴ India is also having an adaptation of Russian supplied *Yakhont* anti-ship, cruise missile *Brahmos* to fire either from naval ships or from SU-30 MKI attack aircraft.¹⁵ But despite all this, India's long range deployment capabilities beyond the region are limited in comparison to P-5. However, the rapid deployment capabilities are sufficient to deal with minor powers in the Indian Ocean region. In qualitative measures of military capability, India is still a regional power, as it is heavily dependent on external suppliers for major weapon systems. It lacks both naval and long range air power capabilities as well as Inter Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) system. But as a whole in aggregate numerical measures, its forces may surpass those of France, UK, Japan and Germany.

In demographic sense, the approximate size of the Indian middle class is larger than the population of all the major powers except China, although in terms of purchasing power this middle class is much weaker than its counterparts in all the major powers. India also contains one of the largest pools of skilled workers, especially in the information technology area, which can be a major asset, both economically and politically. Its space programme has succeeded in placing different types of satellites in space. It has developed and deployed different types of launch vehicles. So it is making major strides in the area of technology also. Its greatest asset in the knowledge sphere is its IT sector in which it has emerged as a leading player in the global IT arena.

In comparison of regional powers, India's power capabilities, except in respect of per capita income, are appreciably higher than those of Brazil, Indonesia, Iran, Pakistan, Nigeria and Egypt. In regard to GNP in dollar terms, India has the largest economy among all the regional powers, except that of Brazil, while in PPP terms India's GNP is double that of Brazil. In per capita income, in dollar terms, almost all the aforesaid regional powers except Nigeria rank higher than India. In military sense, India has an overall superiority on all the regional powers.¹⁶

India's Efforts

Since the end of the cold war, India's foreign policy has gone through a metamorphosis in tune with the changing global order. The disintegration of USSR, demise of the bipolar world and domestic economic problems prompted India to reassess its foreign policy and adjust its foreign relations of the earlier decades. Serious domestic and international problems compelled India to reorganize its foreign policy on the basis of more pragmatic considerations.

Indian leaders have pursued power and influence in a variety of ways.

Reshuffling Alignments

Being sandwiched in the middle group, India, on the one hand, is ameliorating its position through various new permutations and combinations with the US, and on the other hand, it is hobnobbing with other centers of power and developing states adroitly.¹⁷ India has opted to be closer to the only superpower in the post cold war system.¹⁸ The relations between the two have undergone significant transformation since the early 1990s.¹⁹ Now, there relations are no more constrained rather they are moving in the direction of enhancing all round cooperation in the areas of military, economic, and even nuclear.²⁰ India has consolidated its military to military relations with USA through various agreements like Agreed Minutes on Defence Relations, General Security and Military Information Agreement, Master Information Exchange Agreement (MIEA), High Technology Cooperation Group, Next Step in Strategic Partnership (NSSP), New Framework for US-India Defence Relationship, and Research Development Testing and Evaluation (RTD&E).²¹ Besides, India is enhancing its relations with USA in other fields also through civil nuclear deal, joint statement on US-India relations, statement of principles for India-US high technology commerce, cooperation in the field of education, space and science and technology, MOU on enhanced cooperation on energy security, energy efficiency, clean energy and climate change, establishment of strategic dialogue and joint strategies on international terrorism. Simultaneously, India is maintaining close relationship with Russia and China in the form of strategic partnership in all the areas. Besides, the three have given expression to form a triangular relationship to check the emerging hegemony and dominance of U.S.A. India's approach towards a multipolar world order is manifested in its continued approach to international institutions. India has been the leading champion of the poor country cause in the WTO, its spearheaded opposition to wealthy states' agricultural subsidies during the Doha Round, and it has been perhaps the most important state in resisting the Western trade liberalization agenda.²² India has also remained a strident critic of the governance of IMF and Multilateral Development banks, and a loud proponent of the need for UN Security Council reforms.²³ India aspires for a permanent seat in the Security Council along with the support of countries of Europe, Africa and Latin America. Relations with Central Asian Republics have also emerged as an important area in India's foreign policy due to this region's geo-strategic location and proximity to India. Post-cold war situation has also influenced the regional environment of South Asia. As a result, India's policy towards its neighbors has witnessed multiple changes. It has been constantly busy in improving its bilateral relations with both of its important neighbors China and India through various confidence-building-measures and certain other arrangements.

Boosting Economic Ties

On the economic front, India adopted a market-oriented reforms process that involved, among other things, the devaluation of currency, easing of trade and foreign investment regulations and the liberalization of the financial sector. The reforms resulted in substantial changes in India's economic interaction with outside world. Some scholars even argue that Indian diplomacy in the post cold war era is focused on economic issues more than political matters. After launching a major liberalization programme, India is embracing multilateralism to solve its major problems on economic front. It has actively and cogitatively engaged itself in several multilateral forums. It started to pay greater attention to Southeast Asia and Far East. Earlier, India viewed Southeast Asia through the prism of cold war, and trade and economic interactions with this region was miniscule. Since the 1990s, expanding trade links led to greater engagement with the region, described as 'Look East Policy'. In this process it joined ASEAN, first as its 'sectoral' dialogue partner, and finally as full dialogue

partner. Economic engagements with the region have taken place through the formation of joint trade committees, joint business commissions, India-ASEAN Business Council, and ASEAN-India Joint Management Committee. ASEAN-India Working Group on Trade and Investment and ASEAN-India Fund have been created to bolster trade, tourism, and science and technology cooperation between the two partners. India is also engaged in certain other multilateral forums like ASEM (Asia-Europe-Meeting), BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation), G-8, G-20, IBSA (India Brazil and South Africa), IOR-ARC (India Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation), ACD(Asia Cooperation Dialogue), ARF, SCO (as observer) etc.

In East Asia, India has improved its relations with Japan and South Korea significantly. Both Japanese and Korean investments in the Indian economy are substantial in important sectors of automobile, electronics and telecommunications. Such involvement is only expected to increase with the rise of China, as both Japan and Korea have historic reasons to feel China as a potential challenger. India's quest to be an economic power demands the availability of huge energy resources so that it can sustain its projected annual growth rate of 8 to 10 percent. Consequently, it is busy in compensating the same through numerous collaborations with countries like Vietnam, Sudan, Syria, Russia, Central Asian Republics and traditional Gulf states. Indian energy companies have reached out to these countries for joint ventures in the areas of natural gas and oil. India is also engaging many African countries by using the goodwill of yesteryears. Through these efforts, Indian companies have been able to gain contracts to assemble automobiles in countries such as Senegal.²⁴ Indian government has also engaged the continent's New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The main motto of NEPAD is to seek increased economic and political collaboration with non African countries.²⁵ Collaboration is also emerging between India and some main Latin American countries like Brazil, Mexico and Argentina in the areas of trade, investment, software development and energy. Brazil and Mexico have also supported India in the Doha rounds of trade negotiations over agricultural pricing and subsidies. Indian companies like Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys and Wipro have also reached out to the countries like Uruguay and Argentina to open up call centers. Hence, India is seriously busy in making economic alliances at the bilateral, regional and global level.

Enhancing Military Capabilities

India is also seriously engaged in enhancing its nuclear and missile capabilities to cover the Central Asia, Middle East, East Asia and Australasia. Since the nuclear tests of May 1998 India has stepped up its missile programme in developing not only land based missiles but also sea launched missiles as its minimum nuclear deterrent doctrine envisions in a triadic nuclear defence. India is busy in improving the performance of the ballistic missiles developed during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Key initiatives in this phase include the incorporation of new features to improve the 'hit to kill' capabilities of the missiles and the use of newer and lighter materials in the construction of the missile systems. Among other priorities are projects to build for Army and Air Force variants of the *BrahMos* supersonic cruise missile, air-to-air missiles, the development of 'smart' missiles that are smaller, lighter, agile, and can home in on targets with great accuracy; the development of hypersonic vehicles, nanotechnologies, homing guidance, very large systems integration, miniaturized electro-mechanical systems, system on chip, and newer materials such as ceramics and lightweight composites. The DRDO is also developing a 3,000-4,000km-range variant of the *Agni*, often referred to as the *Agni-III*. It is also reported that India is developing an ICBM called *Surya* or *Agni-IV*.²⁶ The two stage *Agni-III* could eventually be converted into an *Agni-IV* ICBM with the addition of a third stage motor. However, the current geo-political situation does not see an urgent need for such capability, but given the highly uncertain international situation due to the global war on

terrorism, the oncoming global oil/energy crisis and growing demands of Indian economic development the geopolitical situation can turn out to be very fluid. Thus national strategic demand may see India developing *Agni-IV*. India is also developing Naval, Army and Air Force variants of Brahmos cruise missile. It is paying serious efforts for its *Sagarika* program which is believed to be driven by its long-term goals to achieve a secure sea-based, second-strike nuclear capability. Besides *Akash* and *Trishul* projects, India is seeking missile defence systems from US, Israel and Russia to construct a missile shield against any missile attack.²⁷ Even this has been one of the four items in the US-India Next Step in Strategic Partnership (NSSP) of January 2004.²⁸ It has been keenly interested in Arrow-2 and Green Pine radar from Israel, PAC-3 from USA, S-300 from Russia etc. India is interested in acquiring 'X-Band' radars with the range of 4600 km to pick out missiles and airborne objects. This acquisition will bring cities like Beijing, large parts of Southeast Asia and also countries in the entire Middle East within India's viewing range. The present Indian capability is the Swordfish radar that can spot objects from 600-800 km away, which is under an upgrade to have a 1500 km range. However, India has to be careful enough not to engage in overblown rhetoric, confrontational military postures and rapid buildup, especially of long range missiles, which can result in adversarial responses from the major powers.

Achieving Soft Power Status

Soft power resources are increasingly important, as they complement hard power resources. They also provide a less costly means for exercising and preserving a state's power in international affairs.²⁹ Soft power resources are turning into a better alternative as the use of military power has become difficult in an increasingly independent and globalized world. In this case, India has a good record. Soft power resources include reputation and image in outside world, cultural richness, state capacity, strategy and diplomacy, national leadership, institutional strength etc.³⁰ The display of India's soft power is manifest in diverse forms. Indian civilization dating back 6000 years is one of the four or five major cultural formations of the world. Despite the colonial victim, Indian contributions to the world civilization are significant. Being the birth place of four major world religions, India is a unique place in the world of diverse cultures and values. It is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-linguistic society; and its democratic system is an inspiration to millions worldwide. India's normative influence has been reasonably high in the developing world. India has been a consistent voice on behalf of the unprivileged for global equality and a new international economic order. This stance has been manifest in India's position at world trade talks and in UN forums.³¹ The exportation of Indian cultural products has a worldwide market. Its cuisine, art, music, film and dance is likely to expand with the increasing globalization in the cultural sphere. The attraction of Indian cultural products is sustained through the presence of a vibrant diasporas of about 25 million persons of Indian origin worldwide. They form a significant part of the population in many countries of South America and the Caribbean as well as Southeast Asia, West Asia, North Africa, UK and North America. Effective leadership is another soft power resource that is critical to translate other power resources, both hard and soft, into international influence. But often the Indian leaders, especially in coalitional governments, have focused on domestic politics excessively. On diplomatic front, India has played, and still playing a major role in global negotiations. However, due to larger geopolitical factors and domestic constraints, this resource has not been effectively utilized.³² But as a whole, India's image as a soft power is increasingly recognized worldwide. Its position is significantly high in some areas while it has a considerable potential in others.

REAL CHALLENGES

But India has to face formidable challenges, while vying for a major power status, at all the levels-----global, regional, bilateral and domestic.

Global Challenges

At global level, India has to face numerous challenges. Prominent among them are to understand the complexities of contemporary international relations, tackle the delusion of globalization, maintaining the balance between unilateralism and multilateralism, problem of nuclear energy security and denial posture of great powers towards emerging India. It is true that emerging unipolarity has caused a serious threat to various countries in the name of 'pre-emption' and 'export of democracy' by the only super power USA. This has been further complicated by a weak United Nations. So India will not be in a position to confront the threat of such hegemony and dominance without the support of other important nations. The process of globalization has also emerged as a great force in the post cold war era. It has created a paradoxical situation. This development has been creating a 'closed polity' by way of hegemony and dominance of USA whereas in the economic sphere it has introduced an open economy through the process of liberalization and privatization. Hence, political accommodation in terms of democratization of international system is not available to a country like India. To create a niche for itself by evolving a balance between the US and other centers of power to get the maximum leverage will also be a tough task. Besides security threats from neighbours, India has to confront the global politics of nuclear proliferation. To fulfill the dire need and requirement of energy from other countries will also be a challenging job for India. Even the supply of nuclear fuel under 123 agreement will not be a easy task. And finally, one is a historical proven trend that existing great powers attack rising powers for not respecting the old rules. Major Powers may adopt the policies of containment, satellization or accommodation to stop the rise of middle powers. Containment may be through the act of regional balancing, as US is doing by supporting Pakistan to balance India. It may be further supplemented by satellization through economic aid and military alliances. And finally, a major power can vaporize the identity of a rising power through merger of interests in the name of accommodation. So India has to be very cautious while dealing with the major powers.

Regional Challenges

At regional level, the challenge comes from the volatile environment surrounding India. The situation in Central Asia and West Asia is tense due to the strategic location, energy resources, competition for pipeline routes and the presence of sheer number of regional and global players. The race for military bases and the regime change experiments through 'color revolutions' have added a new dimension to this competition in the region. Earlier, analysts felt that the real competition was between Russia and the U.S. However as of late, China has created a huge profile for itself through trade, energy deals, military agreements and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).³³ All the five states of CARs, along with states surrounding the Caspian Sea, have to withstand the pressure of MNCs of the USA, UK, Italy etc., as well as, the Russian, Chinese and Indian thrust for getting oil. Domestically all are passing through the process of state and nation-building in a region bereft of democratic norms. They are also witnessing ethnic and religious strife in their multi-cultural and multi-racial systems. Two gulf wars in West Asia, along with continued differences among Israel and Palestine, have created a difficult condition not only for peace and tranquility in the region but also for oil price and its supply to large parts of the world, including India. The transportation of oil through pipelines from these regions has also been disrupted due to politics and outside powers' interests in this area. India, though, it has good relations with both these regions, has not been able to maneuver its position in a direction favourable to its foreign policy goals.

As is evident in the post-cold war era, economic factors have acquired significance in the relations among the states. Consequently, growth of regional economic groupings has been inevitable. But despite the urgency and necessity of such collaborations among the states of this region, they have not been able to forge closer economic ties. Though some economic regional groupings such as — IOC-ARC, BIMSTEC, SAFTA (under SAARC) etc. have been established, yet for one or the other reason they have failed to deliver the requisite result. CARs have also formed SCO, along with Russian and Chinese participation, but India's role remains limited to an 'observer'. These efforts could not become a reality due to 'trust deficit' among the major states in the region. Due to this trend SAFTA cannot become viable and IOC-ARC and BIMSTEC are yet to take off. All these groupings could not flourish due to the lack of institutionalization and absence of strategies capable of handling the emerging challenges of the new global system.

Moreover, the region is also facing some non-conventional security threats with spillover impact on India's foreign policy. The incident of 9/11 and America's attack on *Al Qaeda's* activities in Afghanistan have brought out international terrorism on the door steps of India. It has not only aggravated the already prevailing proxy war scenario between India and Pakistan but has enhanced the risk of such terrorist activities in surrounding regions of West, Central and Southeast Asian States. This has further provided momentum to the already existing activities of small arms exports among ethnic and terrorist groups in the area. Financing such activities for a longer period is a big challenge for them. So to sustain such activities these groups are involved in the process of drug trafficking in the region. Consequently, smuggling along 'triangle of crescent' and 'golden triangle' became a routine activity. As a result, India became sandwiched as it forms the central area linking these two regions. Thus, these activities have encouraged several non-conventional threats for India, which foreign policy makers have to deal with utmost seriousness and promptness.

Bilateral Challenges

At bilateral level, rising India will have to face containment from two of its most proximate and rival neighbours---China and Pakistan. China is an expanding power in Asia. Its expansionism is evident from the fact that it is engulfed in maritime disputes with almost all the surrounding countries like Vietnam, Philippines, Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, North Korea and South Korea.³⁴ Its increasing influence in Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Myanmar, its territorial claims on parts of India, its lack of support for India's membership in UN Security Council and other regional and global organizations are some of the strong signs of intention to prevent the rise of India as a global player.³⁵ China is thus involved in a complex game of encirclement with India. China has made concerted efforts to marginalize India in South and Southeast Asia.³⁶ It has armed Pakistan with nuclear weapons and ballistic missile technology, and has built strong military-to-military ties with Burma, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka as part of what Indians see as a strategy to tie India down. China is also developing deep-water ports throughout the Indian Ocean to support its projected blue-water naval capacity. It has been developing a 'string-of-pearls' strategy, expanding influence into ports in Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. According to a report by US defence contractor Booz Allen Hamilton (BAH), "China is building strategic relationships along the sea lanes from the Middle East to the South China Sea in a way that suggests defensive and offensive positioning to protect its energy interests". China emerged as the biggest military spender in the Asia-Pacific in 2010, and now has the second largest defence expenditure in the world. China's navy is considered the third-largest in the world behind only the US and Russia, and superior to the Indian navy. In this context, India perceives Chinese actions as power maximization, and fears that China's forward-basing strategy will be used to contain India and rapidly achieve

hegemony in the Indian Ocean.

Despite the economic cooperation and bilateral political, as well as socio-cultural exchanges, the distrust between the two is actually growing at an alarming rate. Though, China is India's largest trading partner yet this cooperation has done little to assuage each country's concerns about the other's intentions. The two sides are locked in a classic security dilemma, where any action taken by one is immediately interpreted by the other as a threat to its interests.³⁷ At the global level, the rhetoric is all about cooperation, and indeed, the two sides have worked together on climate change, global trade negotiations and demanding a restructuring of global financial institutions in view of the global economy's shifting center of gravity. At the bilateral level, however, both are competitor. Though, both have a vested interest in stabilizing their relationship by seeking out issues on which their interests converge, but pursuing mutually desirable interests does not inevitably produce satisfactory solutions to strategic problems. A troubled history coupled with the structural uncertainties engendered by their simultaneous rise is propelling the two Asian giants into a trajectory that they might find rather difficult to navigate in the coming years. Sino-Indian ties have entered turbulent times, and they are likely to remain there for the foreseeable future.

The other containment comes from another neighbor---Pakistan, the only South Asian state that has tried to resist Indian predominance through military and ideological means. India's rise as a great power will most immediately impact the extremely dangerous stalemate between these two states. India and Pakistan have been engaged in full-scale wars in 1948, 1965 and 1971, with crises surrounding continuing Pakistani support for an indigenous insurgency in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir erupting periodically, and threatening war. Following Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests in May 1998, Pakistani incursions across the Line of Control in the Kargil region of Kashmir led to another limited war with veiled nuclear threat. This is the only nuclear threat which leaves India without the ability to punish terrorist attacks through conventional retaliation. Historical, strategic, ideological, and domestic reasons all play a role in India's obsession with Pakistan, and Pakistan's concern with India. From time to time, outside countries, foundations, and private individuals have supported efforts to change the perceptions of Indians and Pakistanis, and to promote better understanding between the two. Various programs have been arranged to bring together students, journalists, politicians, strategists, artists, intellectuals, and retired generals from both countries. But most of the India-Pakistan dialogues intended to promote understanding wind up rehearsing old arguments, often for the sake of non-South Asian participants present.³⁸ Both have already agreed to a wide variety of confidence-building measures, including notification of troop movements and exercises and of the location of nuclear facilities, hotlines between military commanders, regular meetings between prime ministers, and restrictions on propaganda and other activities that might exacerbate India-Pakistan relations. But in times of crisis, most of them have simply ceased to function. In case of Pakistan, until the problem of terrorism and proxy war is resolved India can't be tension free from its side. Therefore, without building genuine confidence with its neighbor India can't remain in peace with them. Without the cooperation between India, Pakistan and China neither peace can prevail in South Asia nor these states can contribute to the cause of global peace.

Domestic Challenges

The challenges of infrastructure development, sustainable economic growth, better education, water and sanitation provisions for millions, and energy requirement for the increased demands of a rising power are enormous on the domestic front. With respect to the quality of life indicators, India lags behind even to some small countries of Africa and Asia. Other domestic level constraints include India's weak economic position, absence of national integration, weak coalition

governments, lack of strategic thinking, unmanageable cultural diversity and inability to develop a grand strategy appropriate for a state seeking a major power role. Endemic poverty is one of the strongest constraints on movement of India's foreign policy in desired direction. However, India can be justifiably proud of its progress in combating chronic hunger and malnutrition, but according to official statistics, more than a quarter of its population still lives in poverty. Unless New Delhi can mount a significant effort to address this problem, neither its military prowess nor its status as a nuclear weapon state will grant it a leading role in world affairs. If India's economy is not sufficiently robust or its population adequately educated and housed, the country will be battered by global economic downturns and resource shortages. New Delhi should concentrate on providing universal health care, proper education, protection of environment, and building of infrastructure.

CONCLUSIONS

Undoubtedly, India is a rising power by several indicators of capability, although this power is yet to be fully realized or recognized by key actors in the international system. India's recent policy approach has performed well at building capabilities and influences to advance the country's core foreign policy goals. It is now having world's second largest population, the third largest armed forces, the fourth largest economy in terms of PPP, the eighth largest industrial economy, largest pool of scientists and engineers after the US, and fifth or sixth of the leading space powers in the world. India is realigning its foreign policy according to the new situations. It is consolidating its economic ties and enhancing its military capabilities. But all this will not be a smooth sailing for India. It has to face grave challenges at all the levels. At global level, it has to understand the complexities of contemporary international relations, so that it can make a balance between unilateralism and multilateralism. To fulfill the energy needs for its growing population and rapid industrialization will also be a challenge for it. It will also face a denial posture of great powers towards its emergence. At regional level, volatile environment surrounding India will not be in favour of smooth rising of India. Situation in different regions like West Asia, Central Asia, and certain other parts of Asian Continent is tense and unfavourable to India. At bilateral level, China and Pakistan will remain constraints ad infinitum in the peaceful rise of India. And domestically, India has a plethora of problems like lack of adequate infrastructure, lethargic economic growth, absence of national integration, weak coalitional governments, deficient of strategic culture etc. Therefore, India needs to put its own house in order first while jostling for a major power status. It must pursue its foreign policy assiduously. Hopefully, if challenges are tackled successfully, India may emerge as a great power just before or by the mid of this century.

REFERENCES

1. Yadav, R. S. 2009. 'Changing Dynamics of India's Foreign Policy,' in R. S. Yavav and Suresh Dhanda, ed, *India's Foreign Policy: Contemporary Trends*, New Delhi: Shipra, p. 25.
2. Nye, Joseph S. Jr. 2008. *Understanding International Conflicts*, New Delhi: Pearson Education, p. 277.
3. Vilmaz, Muzaffer Ercan. 2008. 'The New World Order: An Outline of the Post Cold War Era', *Alternative*, vol.7, no.4, Winter, URL: <http://www.alternativesjournal.net/volume7/Number4/myilmaz.pdf>. Also see, Harrison, Ewan. 2004. *The Post-Cold War International System*. New York: Routledge. For some other views on world order, see,

-
- Huntington, Samuel P. 1997. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York: Touchstone; and Kanet, Roger E. 2007. *Russia: Re-emerging Great Power*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
4. Nayar, Baldev Raj and Paul, T. V. 2004. *India in World Order: Searching for Major Power Status*, New Delhi: Foundation Books, p.33.
 5. World Economic Outlook Database, April 2011, International Monetary Fund, URL: <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2011/01/weodata/index.aspx>
 6. Freeman, Sam Perlo, et. al. 2011. 'Military Expenditure,' *SIPRI YEAR BOOK*, 2011, Oxford: Oxford University Press, P.166-67. URL: <http://www.sipri.org/yearbook/2011/files/SIPRIYB1104-04A-04B.pdf>
 7. Nayar and Paul. 2004. Opcit, p.44.
 8. For a good account of India's nuclear inventory, see Dhanda, Suresh. 2009. 'India's Nuclear Weapons Programme: Retrospect and Prospects,' *Indian Foreign Affairs Journal*, vol.4, no.1, January-March, pp. 86-93.
 9. Norris, Robert S. et. al, 2002. 'India's Nuclear Forces 2002,' *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. 58, no. 02, March/April, p. 2.
 10. Chowdhury, Srinjoy. 2002. 'Sukhoi Capable of Hitting Chinese Targets,' *Statesman*, 28 September.
 11. Raj Chengappa suggests that India first attempted to mate externally carried nuclear weapons pods with the Jaguar and later shifted to the Mirage-2000 for this mission. Chengappa, Raj. 2000. *Weapons of Peace: The secret Story of India's Quest to be a Nuclear Power*, New Delhi: Harper Collins, pp.327 and 382-84.
 12. Since the early 1990s India and Pakistan have been steadily moving their nuclear deterrence from aircraft based to ballistic missile based with potentially devastating results for the South Asian stability. The introduction of nuclear capable ballistic missiles on a significant scale adds to the negative variables that collectively raise the risk of an inadvertent nuclear war breaking out in a region that is unstable principally due to the Kashmir territorial dispute. Sheppard, Ben, 2002. 'Ballistic Missiles: Complicating the Nuclear Quagmire,' in D. R. Sardesai and Raju G. C. Thomas, eds, *Nuclear India in the Twenty First Century*, New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, p.189.
 13. The *Prithvi* class of missiles is a road mobile, single stage, liquid fuelled, short range missile that employs propulsion technology from the Soviet SA-2 surface to air (SAM) missile. The *prithvi* is otherwise Indian in design. The *prithvi* program began in 1983 and was test fired in 1988. Three basic types *prithvis* currently exist. The *Prithvi-I* has a range sufficient to strike any significant target if deployed anywhere along the Indian border. The Indian army has reportedly ordered 100 of these missiles, which entered into serial production in 1997 and reportedly can be equipped with 5 types of warheads. A longer range variant of *Prithvi-I*, the *Prithvi-II* (SS-250), an air force version has also been developed. Underdevelopment is a *Prithvi-III* (SS-350), which will be used for naval purposes. This third variant also known as *Dhanush*, may be solid fueled. It is believed to be derived from the Russian SA-2.

14. The *Agni* missiles have been developed, reportedly with distant China as well as nearby Pakistan in mind, and have been tested in three versions, with a forth, intended to be of longer range, underdevelopment. The first variant, *Agni-I*, was demonstrated in various tests to ranges between 900 and 1200 km, and the second variant, *Agni-II*, to ranges between 1200 and 2000 km, each with notional payloads of 1000 kg. A third variant referred as again *Agni-I*, is Pakistan specific with a range of 700 km. This Pakistan specific missile reportedly weighs twelve tons and evidently uses only solid fuel propulsion. It presumably lighter in weight than the variants with the liquid fuel engines, and easier to mount on road- mobile transport-erector-launchers (TELs) or on the rail road launch cars, India reportedly has been developing. A forth variant, *Agni-III* intended for ranges closer to 3000 km (using three solid fuel stages) with a 1000 kg payload has been tested, and is underdevelopment. For detailed description of various Indian missiles, see Dhanda, Suresh. 2010. *Nuclear Politics in South Asia, New Delhi: Regal*.
15. Brahmos missile is a product of an Indo-Russian joint venture. Brahmos is a cruise missile which cruises horizontally and travels only in the atmosphere. It is a two stage vehicle that has a solid propellant booster and liquid propellant ramjet system. The Brahmos is the first and the only supersonic cruise missile that uses liquid ramjet technology. It cruises in the atmosphere at the speed faster than sound. It has been rated at 290 km in range when surface launched using the supersonic boost state, it may be capable of longer ranges if used only in sub-sonic mode or when launched from aircraft. It has been configured to launch from ground including silos and ships, submarines and aircrafts. Besides, it can blast off from a mobile platform on land, that is, from a vehicle. One may assume it as a nuclear capable, if equipped with a small enough nuclear warhead. For details, see Datta, Rahul, 'India to Go in for Cruise Missiles,' *The Pioneer*, 15 June 2001; 'Brahmos Launch a Big Breakthrough,' *The Hindu*, October 30, 2003; 'Before You Can Say Brahmos,' *Hindustan Times*, 30 October 2003; 'Brahmos Flight Tested,' *The Hindu*, 30 October 2003; and 'Anti-ship Version of Brahmos Proves its Mettle,' *The Hindu*, 3 December 2003.
16. Nayar and Paul. 2004. Opcit, p.48.
17. Mohan, C. Raja. 2006. *India's New Foreign Policy Strategy*, URL: <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/Mohan.pdf>
18. Yadav, R.S. 2009. Opcit, p.28.
19. For detail, see Kapur, S.Paul and Ganguly Sumit. 2007. 'The transformation of US-India Relations', *Asian Survey*, vol.47, no.4, pp.647-53.
20. Ibid.
21. For critical evaluation of these agreements see Bajpai, Kanti. 2005. 'Where are India and the US Heading?', *Economic & Political Weekly*, 6 August, pp. 3577-3781; Vanaik, Achin. 2005. 'Significance of Framework Agreement on Defence', *Economic & Political Weekly*, 6 August, pp. 3581-3585; Koththara, Varghese. 2006. 'India-US Defence Cooperation: Expectations and Prospects', *Economic & Political Weekly*, 6 August,

-
- pp. 3585-3589; and Murlidharan, Sukumar. 2006. 'Partnership and its Discontents', *Economic & Political Weekly*, 6 August, pp. 3589-3591.
22. Ciorciari, John D. 2011. 'India's Approach to Great Power Status,' *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, vol. 35:1, Winter, p. 77.
 23. Ibid.
 24. Harsch, Ernest. 2004. 'Africa and Asia Forge Stronger Alliances,' *Africa Recovery*, vol.18, no.1, pp.1-12.
 25. Ibid.
 26. Dhanda, Suresh. 2010. Opcit, p. 117. Also see, Sheppard, Ben. 2002. 'Ballistic Missiles: Complicating the Nuclear Quagmire,' in D. R. Sardesai and Raju G. C. Thomas, eds, *Nuclear India in the Twenty First Century*, New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, p.194.
 27. Dhanda, Suresh. 2009. 'Nuclear Deterrence in South Asia: An Assessment of Second-Strike Capability, *World Affairs*, vol.13, no.4, winter, pp. 108-9.
 28. Kumar, Vinod A. 2008. 'A Phased Approach to India's Missile Defence Planning,' *Strategic Analysis*, vol.32, no. 2, March, p.179.
 29. Nayar and Paul, 2004. Opcit, p.57.
 30. For a detailed literature on soft power, see Nye, Joseph. 2004. 'Soft Power and American Foreign Policy,' *Political Science Quarterly*, 119, no.2, pp.225-259.
 31. Nayar and Paul. 2004, Opcit, p.58.
 32. Ibid. p.63.
 33. Sachdeva, Gulshan. 2006. India's Attitude Towards China's Growing Influence in Central Asia, *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, vol 4, no. 3, p. 23.
 34. Parthasarathy, G. 2009. 'China Flexes Muscles,' *The Tribune*, 29, October. Also see, Singh, Anita Inder. 2010. 'China's Expanding Influence in South Asia,' *The Tribune*, 13 October; and Garve, John W. 2001. *Protracted Contest: Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Twentieth Century*, Seattle: University of Washington Press.
 35. Pant, Harsh V. 2006. 'Indian Foreign Policy and China,' *Strategic Analysis*, vol.30, no.4, Oct-Dec, p.762. Also see, Dasgupta, Punyapriya. 2009. 'Chinese Pinpricks over Arunachal,' *The Tribune*, 6 November.
 36. Dwivedi, G.G. 2011. 'Checkmating the Dragon's Growing Influence,' *The Tribune*, 6 July.
 37. For an overview of the historical rivalry, see Malik, J. Mohan. 1995. 'China-India Relations in the Post Soviet Era: The Continuing Rivalry,' *China Quarterly*, 142, pp.317-55.
 38. Cohan, Stephen P. 2001. *India: Emerging Power*, Washington D.C: Brooking Institution Press, p.207.